

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 00794 061627Z

47

ACTION NEA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8167

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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TAGS: EFIN, OVIP (ROCKEFELLER, DAVID), TS

SUBJ: ROCKEFELLER VISIT TO TUNISIA

SUMMARY: CHASE MANHATTAN BANK GROUP HEADED BY CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD DAVID ROCKEFELLER WAS WELL RECEIVED IN TUNIS AT HIGHEST LEVEL. VISIT PROVIDED ANOTHER OCCASION FOR TUNISIANS TO STRESS THEIR DESIRE FOR GREATER COOPERATION WITH AMERICAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND ALLOWED BOTH SIDES TO CALL FOR TRIANGULAR INVESTMENT ACTIVITY BASED ON PETRO-DOLLARS AND US TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT. POSSIBILITIES OF OPENING IDENTIFIABLE CHASE BANK FACILITY HERE IS TO BE STUDIED IN NEAR FUTURE BY SPECIAL CHASE MISSION TO TUNIS. END SUMMARY.

1. ANOTHER BRIEF, VISIT OF DAVID ROCKEFELLER AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS OF CHASE MANHATTAN BANK TO TUNISIA JAN 29-30 WENT EXTREMELY WELL AND CONTRIBUTED TO GOT/USG EFFORTS TO EXPAND TRADE AND INVESTMENT COOPERATION. GOT PULLED OUT STOPS FOR ROCKEFELLER PARTY, INCLUDING DINNER HOSTED BY
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PAGE 02 TUNIS 00794 061627Z

PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL

MINISTERS AND MOST IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF TUNISIAN BANKING AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY. IN SHORT AFTERNOON IN TUNIS, HE ALSO MADE CALLS ON FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI, MINISTER OF PLAN AYARI, PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA, MINISTER OF FINANCE FITOURI (WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK GHENIMA AND PDG OF TUNISIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR.). AMBASSADOR HOSTED LUNCHEON-CONFERENCE WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY FOUR MINISTERS, SEVERAL BANK DIRECTORS, TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR HEDDA AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

2. VARIOUS FORMAL MEETINGS AND SOCIAL OCCASIONS GAVE ROCKEFELLER OPPORTUNITY TO STRESS ADVANTAGES TO TUNISIA OF ATTRACTING PETRO-DOLLARS FOR INVESTMENT HERE AND IN OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN COOPERATION WITH AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY AND BANKING AND MANAGEMENT KNOW-HOW. THIS THEME FOUND READY ECHO ON TUNISIAN SIDE WITH BOURGUIBA JR. STRESSING THAT THIS HAS BEEN TUNISIAN OBJECTIVE SINCE IT WAS FIRST ENUNCIATED BY NOUIRA IN FEBRUARY 1973, WELL BEFORE MASSIVE INCREASE OF OIL REVENUES. POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF IDENTIFIABLE CHASE BANK IN TUNISIA WAS ALSO DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS, AND ROCKEFELLER PROMISED THAT HIGH LEVEL STUDY GROUP WOULD BE RETURNING TO TUNIS IN NEAR FUTURE FOR THOROUGH STUDY OF LOCAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION AND WAYS IN WHICH CHASE MIGHT BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH PRESENCE HERE AND GENERALLY ASSIST TUNISIA IN FURTHERING ITS INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES.

3. ROCKEFELLER VISIT RECEIVED WARM AND EXTENSIVE PRESS, TELEVISION, AND RADIO TREATMENT.

4. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE ROCKEFELLER VISIT CAME AT EXCELLENT TIME FOLLOWING VISIT TO US OF DELEGATION HEADED BY MINISTER OF PLAN AYARI AND BEFORE VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE TABOR AND LARGE OPIC-SPONSORED TRIANGULAR INVESTMENT MISSION TO ARAB NATIONS AT END OF MONTH. PRIME MINISTER TOLD AMBASSADOR AT ROCKEFELLER DINNER THAT HEAVY FARE OF HIGH-LEVEL AMERICAN VISITORS IS A "GOOD THING." ALL THESE EXCHANGES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TUNIS 00794 061627Z

ARE BUILDING UP IMPRESSION OF CLOSE TRADE AND INVESTMENT TIES BETWEEN US AND TUNISIA AND MAKING TUNISIAN OFFICIALS AND GENERAL PUBLIC MORE AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS AREA IN PLACE OF PREVIOUS CONCEPT THAT RELATIONS WITH US BASED PRIMARILY ON AID TIES. AS WE HAVE EMPHASIZED IN EARLIER COMMUNICATIONS, DANGER IS THAT THESE EXCHANGES MAY LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT IF WITHIN REASONABLE TIME SOME IMPORTANT INVESTMENT PROJECTS INVOLVING US PRIVATE FIRMS

DO NOT MATERIALIZE. MEMBERS OF AYARI DELEGATION HAVE STRESSED TO US THAT VISIT LED TO SOME PROMISING CONTACTS. REALIZATION OF ANY PROJECTS RESULTING FROM THESE OR FROM SEVERAL EARLIER POSSIBILITIES WOULD HELP SUSTAIN PRESENT MOMENTUM. ESTABLISHMENT OF IDENTIFIABLE US BANKING FACILITY IN TUNISIAN BY EITHER CHASE OR FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK (WHOSE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE ARRIVE IN TUNIS THREE DAYS BEFORE ROCKEFELLER VISIT--MUCH TO SURPRISE OF ROCKEFELLER GROUP) WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL.
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